

**January 20th Board Meeting**  
*Meeting Location: Whitehorse High School*  
*Tuesday, January 20, 2015*

**Members present**

Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

**Others present**

Superintendent Douglas Wright, Clayton Holt, Kit Mantz, Eva Workman, Boyd Silversmith, Brian Dixon, John Fahey, Clayton Long

**Meeting called to order at 3:25 PM**

**A. Oath of Office for the Board of Education - 3:25 p.m.**

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*Elsie A. Dee and Nelson Yellowman took the Oath of Office in their traditional Navajo Language, administered by Clayton Long, Bilingual Education Director. Board President Bill Boyle noted that the existing Board has served together for eight years.*

**B. Organization of the Board of Education**

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**1. Election of Board Officers**

***Motion to elect Debbie Christiansen as Board President.***

Motion by Nelson Yellowman, second by Elsie A Dee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

***Motion to elect Merri Shumway as Board Vice President.***

Motion by Bill Boyle, second by Debbie Christiansen.

Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

**C. Approval of Agenda**

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**1. Approve Agenda**

***Motion to approve agenda.***

Motion by Merri B Shumway, second by Debbie Christiansen.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

## D. Board Closed Session - 3:41 p.m.

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### 1. Personnel

*Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss personnel.*

Motion by Nelson Yellowman, second by Debbie Christiansen.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

## E. Board Work Session - 5:00 pm

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### 1. Montezuma Creek Elementary School Report, Principal Boyd Silversmith

Principal Boyd Silversmith provided an enrollment comparison, showing an increase from last year to this year. He also noted that close to half of his instructional staff are new this year. Principal Silversmith shared positive impact from instructional training they have received and in-house team development groups they have established.

Principal Silversmith also commented on the new state adopted testing program, known as SAGE, which seems more rigorous, requiring students to be more analytic and requiring a more in-depth knowledge of the curriculum. This new type of testing identified some areas of concern and gave staff and faculty a good starting point to implement improvements. He noted that mid-year benchmark test scores are showing some improvement.

Principal Silversmith shared some activities that the school has enjoyed so far this year including: Books for Christmas, Literacy Night at the school (alternating Whitehorse High School), Science Room, Club Einstein, Math Facts, and Cougar Corner to name a few. He specifically thanked Student Services Director Lynette Johnson and Title I for bringing helpful funding for their Science programs. He also explained the value of his parent volunteers who help maintain the incentive programs for the students.

### 2. Whitehorse High School Report, Principal Brian Dixon

Principal Dixon welcomed the Board Members and guests to Whitehorse High School. He shared his staff's combined focus on helping students work towards graduation and keeping their educational goals on the forefront of their minds.

Principal Dixon shared some of the goals the staff had set for future growth and proficiency. He also commented on some strategies being implemented at the school for behavioral intervention, including Check and Connect, and Lunch Workshop.

Principal Dixon also added that current programs such as Parent/Teacher Conferences, new officers in School Community Council and Indian Education Committees, Open Houses, Literacy Nights, math nights, movie nights, Coffee with the Principal and Booster Club have been positive ways they have included the community in supporting their students.

Clayton Holt mentioned the approved projects for the Montezuma Creek schools and noted that difficulties exist with identifying land leases for the proposed Montezuma Creek Elementary School gymnasium, causing delays in progress. He solicited the assistance from community members in attendance and wanted to make them aware of the School District's efforts on behalf of the Montezuma Creek schools.

## F. Break - 5:40 pm

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## G. Welcome and Recognition of Guests - 6:15 p.m.

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### **1. Citizens' Comments**

Bob Turley of Group Workcamps Foundation shared information about his volunteer program and their recent accomplishments in Monument Valley this past summer. He stated that in order to complete their week-long volunteer projects throughout low-income and needy areas, they have stayed in schools in San Juan School District on alternating years, reimbursing the school district for the cost of building use. Since the 1980's the Group Workcamps members have been working with the district to facilitate their workers.

Mr. Turley thanked the Board, Superintendent Wright and Mr. Holt for the ongoing relationship and for hosting their program over the years which make their program possible.

Lourna Daniels, community member and parent, addressed the Board to request a digital marquee sign for the Monument Valley High School. Ms. Daniels stated that they have the support of the Oljato Chapter and brought a letter of support from the Chapter stating such. Business Administrator Clayton Holt stated he had visited with Ms. Daniels prior to the meeting and she addressed some of the questions he had about the design of the marquee, and the Oljato Chapter's proposed help.

Business Administrator Clayton Holt and Board President Bill Boyle both voiced their support of the marquee sign and its benefits community-wide and they welcomed partnering with local

groups to bring a quality sign for the community to use.

Melinda Blackhorse, parent of Albert R. Lyman Middle school student, shared concerns regarding upkeep and safety on county roads, specifically CR 436, which students and families in the district utilize to meet the school buses. She wanted to bring to the board's attention some instances of vehicle damage, vehicle wear and tear, vandalism, and lack of maintenance on these roads. The Board noted that while it was a County responsibility to maintain the county roads, it is also a concerning issue to them as it directly affects the safety and school attendance of the students. Board President Bill Boyle stated that the district would support community efforts by providing a letter of concern to the County.

Board Member Nelson Yellowman voiced his concern about the scheduling of the road grading. He noted that the scheduled maintenance work does not always align with the beginning of the school year and suggested that road maintenance schedules be reworked to make it more of a priority to complete this type of project before school begins. Yellowman also commented that the road conditions vary greatly across the entire district and because of this, actions such as weather related dismissals should be considered by area, not simply administered district wide.

Board President Bill Boyle shared a Resolution from the Aneth Chapter regarding road issues in the district. Board Members Elsie Dee and Nelson Yellowman voiced their support of the resolution, which passed in the Aneth Chapter meeting unanimously, 19-0. President Boyle stated that he would forward the resolution to the district administrators and see how we can appropriately support the resolution and promote action from the County Road Department. The resolution specifically cited county roads 492, 405, and 416. Superintendent Wright was instructed to draft a letter expressing support for the Chapter's resolution. Further discussion should be held in order to identify the concerns and determine how it might be best to collectively present them to the county for discussion.

Bill Todacheene commented that the community will be submitting a letter to the county commissioners requesting attention to the matter. Superintendent Wright stated that if Aneth Chapter could provide the District with their letter to the county, the School District could align its letter to support it.

Toinee Lewis (8:26 pm) shared her concerns with the school board regarding Johnson O'Malley (JOM) funds which are governed by the Indian Education Committee (IEC) funds. She believes that there has been an error made in that the District did not honor a funding request for school fees to be paid for her children. She was concerned that the IEC had approved payment of these fees but the request was rejected by the District. She wanted to know why this decision was made and whether or not it was appropriate. The Board determined that they would research the issue and respond back to Mrs. Lewis.

Emery Beletso, (9:14 pm) new IEC member for Whitehorse High School, asked the Board about the denial of a request for two students to attend the National JOM Conference in Portland, Oregon. Because the planned trip did not meet the criteria as defined in Board Policy, the trip was not approved. The policy had not been considered when the request was made. Superintendent Wright stated there is an appeal process for future out of state requests, but the time frame for appealing this trip has passed. It was recommended to Mr. Beletso that the IEC consider having

the students attend a Leadership Conference within the State of Utah, thus eliminating the out of state travel hurdles and allowing for more students to attend.

## H. Consent Agenda

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- 1. Minutes**
- 2. Revenue Reports**
- 3. Expenditure Reports**
- 4. School Expenditure Reports**
- 5. Board Travel Reports**
- 6. Personnel Report(s) and Information**
- 7. Home School Requests**
- 8. Student Hearings**
- 9. Approval of all Consent Agenda Items**

*Motion to approve all consent agenda items.*

Motion by Nelson Yellowman, second by Merri B Shumway.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

## I. Action Items

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### **1. Board Travel Requests**

Board Members, Superintendent Wright and Clayton Holt attended the Utah School Board's Association Conference in Salt Lake City January 8-10.

Board President Bill Boyle will be traveling to Salt Lake City on January 21 for a UHSAA meeting. This trip will be reimbursed by the UHSAA.

Newly elected Board President Debbie Christiansen, requested to attend the USBA Presidents and Vice Presidents workshop on Saturday, February 7.

Merri Shumway noted a Land Alliance Meeting in Moab in July and indicated that she would bring more details as the date approaches.

Board Member Elsie Dee plans to attend the NAFIS Conference March 22-24 (travel on 21st and 24th).

Superintendent Wright stated he would also be attending the NAFIS Conference (March 22-24), following the University of Virginia training that will be held just prior on March 17-21.

The Board Members were reminded to check their travel budget balances that were attached to the minutes and plan their travel accordingly.

## **2. Comprehensive Guidance, John Fahey**

John Fahey requested Board approval of the district's Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program. The Board voiced their unanimous support.

***Motion to approve signing the Letter of Support of Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Programs as presented by John Fahey.***

Motion by Debbie Christiansen, second by Elsie A Dee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

## **3. Purchase of Bluff Property**

*Due to the disclosed conflict of interest, Board Member Merri Shumway has not participated in the discussions and decisions regarding Bluff Property for the entirety of the process.*

Business Administrator Clayton Holt stated that after potential properties were identified and surveyor input completed, it was determined the most ideal purchase site would include purchase two parcels of land totaling 12.53 from two separate owners. The first parcel is 5.76 acres to be purchased from Eugene Shumway for \$50,000 per acre, and a second parcel of 6.77 acres from the Simpsons for \$25,000 for the first 5 acres and \$50,000 for 1.77 acres. The availability of water and power has been explored and an archaeological survey has been conducted. Preliminary reports provided enough information to indicate it is a good location. Mr. Holt noted that while all the property may not be used for the school, there is option for some flexibility once archaeology concerns are clearly defined and other site utilization concerns are addressed.

***Motion to proceed with purchase of property in Bluff for the future site of the Bluff Elementary school for the total amount of \$501,500 for 12.53 acres.***

Motion by Debbie Christiansen, second by Nelson Yellowman.  
Final Resolution: Motion Carries  
Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee  
Abstain: Merri B Shumway

## J. Impact Aide Application and Public Comment - 7:00 pm

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### **1. Application Process Review**

Superintendent Wright explained that while the Board is constantly seeking input from parents and other concerned individuals, this was an opportunity to review the Impact Aide application, to understand the steps taken to gather the data, and to provide feedback to the Board on the District's performance.

Clayton Holt detailed the GPS mapping process used to verify which students were eligible for Impact Aide funding. Changes in the verification requirement of the Department of Education led to the district's effort this year to verify every student and his/her residence. Superintendent Wright noted that because the information by this method was more concise, the number of students the school district was able to claim actually decreased, which could impact this funding by as much as \$1,000,000.

A summary of the number of federally impacted students in each school was provided to the public and posted online along with the meeting agenda.

### **2. Indian Policies and Procedures**

Superintendent Wright invited the public to review the distributed copies of the current Indian Policies and Procedures. He summarized the document, assuring the public that the intent of the policy and of district practice is to ensure equal opportunity for education for all students in the district. Superintendent noted the collaborative efforts of the Indian Education Committee (IEC) in the document's adaptation, and reiterated his commitment to continually communicate and work together with the IEC. He also commented that he has meets regularly with the Navajo Utah Commission and will continue to communicate regularly with them.

As outlined in the Policies and Procedures, the IEC acts a sounding board, the parents and associated committees bring information from the community to the Board. Examples of items brought to fruition from this communication structure include capital projects completed, in progress and planned for future, as well as support for Johnson O'Malley (JOM) and IEC programs, and targeted support and increased focus on academic needs and programs in schools where Indian student population is higher.

The Impact Aide funding generates an approximate total of \$6,000,000. Of that total, \$4,000,000 goes directly to the General Funds budget and \$2,000,000 goes to the capital Outlay budget.

### **3. Public Comment**

Board President Bill Boyle welcomed IEC members, community members and parents and opened the meeting to anyone wishing to make comment.

Toinee Lewis, IEC President stated that as an IEC committee, they feel it would be beneficial for one or two parents from the IEC board attend the Impact Aid Conference. Ms. Lewis feels the information and networking would be beneficial and they could report the information directly to the other committee members.

Griselda Rogers shared information on a license available which specializes in National Dropout Prevention. The training specializes in working with at-risk youth and if the IEC group was interested they could go online to apply. Toinee Lewis commented that the IEC felt it would be beneficial to send someone from the IEC committee to this training as it might be someone students could better relate to personally. Ms. Rogers stated that ideally, once the person is certified, they can travel throughout the district. Board President Bill Boyle noted that the district has established Intervention and Drop Out programs currently in action and it may be more logical to add the information to those programs, rather than begin a completely new one.

Clayton Long, Bilingual Education Director, JOM Coordinator, and Title 7 coordinator voiced his support on the idea that sending an IEC member to the conferences would be beneficial and the information could be shared community wide, and could possibly be explained in their native language thus increase understanding. Mr. Long suggested the possibility of writing the request to attend related conferences into the Native American Policy and Procedures.

Board Members who have attended the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools Conference (NAFIS) and the National Indian Impacted Schools Association Conference (NIISA) and related meetings shared their opinions on which meetings they felt might be most beneficial for IEC members to attend. The feeling of the Board was that NIISA would be most beneficial for useful information and networking, stating that one great benefit of the NIISA conference is that it allows opportunity for sharing information between schools on what programs have been most beneficial, what is working for them, personal experiences and information for hands-on change. Further, NIISA is much more cost effective, and for the cost, more individuals can attend. The NAFIS conference is more technical in nature, focusing on more of the business and financing of the program. It also is more focused on addressing suggested changes to legislation changes instead of networking.

Deb Benally, Senior Consultant to the IEC Board, voiced her support of IEC members attending either NAFIS or NIISA and stated that the members should be allowed to determine on their own which would best meet their needs.

Toinee Lewis commented that there is some feeling of lack of equality in School Community Council (SCC) committees in northern schools and feels that they don't have equal representation in these schools.

Griselda Rogers commented that the Math Workshop with Mr. Runninghorse (mentioned in the December 2014 Board Meeting) has been approved by the White Mesa Ute Council, will likely occur in Towaoc, CO and is scheduled for February 27th.



Eric Lameman commented general on historical feelings regarding the use of the word Indian vs. Native American throughout history, specifically how it is used in the title “Indian Policies and Procedures.” Administrators and Board Members agreed it is sometimes difficult to know which reference audiences would prefer, and their documents are titled strictly off of Federal Government papers with no intention of offense.

Emery Beletso, new IEC member for Whitehorse High School, commented that he felt the time frames for construction projects were long overdue and would prefer the district move more quickly. Board Member Nelson Yellowman commented that they have been working hard on several district projects and that the current delay is not within the district, but is the Navajo Nation's complicated land procedures that have hindered the progress. The Board once again petitioned for assistance from the community to help in any way possible to progress the land issues.

Board President Bill Boyle thanked those in attendance for their comments and participation, closing the public hearing session.

## K. Discussion Items

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### 1. Staff/Student Recognition

No Staff/Student Recognition items shared at this time.

### 2. Graduation Dates

Proposed Graduation and Advancement dates were discussed. A final calendar will be sent directly to Board Members and schools.

### 3. Policy 1145 Fundraising and Donations & review of model policy

Business Administrator Clayton Holt recommended that the current policy be completely revised to incorporate two sections, following the state model. Mr. Holt recommended separating the gifts/donations and fundraising portions for clarity, as in the state model. Further discussion was deferred to the next meeting, with a draft of the policy.

### 4. Information on next Board Meeting

*February 3, 5:30 p.m.*

Closed Meeting to discuss Business Administrator applications and conduct interviews for selected candidates. Interviews scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m.

*February 10, 3:00 p.m.*

Regular School Board Meeting

*February 17, TBA*

Potential Closed Meeting for more Business Administrator Interviews

L. Adjourn Meeting – 9:35 p.m.

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**1. Motion to Adjourn**

Public portion of the meeting was declared adjourned by President Boyle. A closed session to further discuss personnel will follow.

M. Closed Session – 9:40 p.m.

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**1. Personnel**

*Motion to go into closed session to further discuss personnel.*

Motion by Debbie Christiansen, second by Elsie A Dee.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Debbie Christiansen, Nelson Yellowman, Bill Boyle, Elsie A Dee, Merri B Shumway

Closed Session adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

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Board Officer

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District Administrator